THE WISCONSIN ARCHITECT

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE WISCONSIN ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATION —
A CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

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security savings and loan building
milwaukee
third award in commercial class
fritz von grossmann, architect, milwaukee

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Streamlined school building Designs not to his liking

At the May Twenty-second dinner meeting of the Milwaukee Division, Philip Will, Jr., guest speaker, told the architects in no uncertain terms what he thinks of the present day streamlined school design.

Several members from the Madison Division attended to hear Mr. Will, the Chicago architect who is a Fellow of The American Institute of Architects and won The Institute's 1951 Honor Award for School Design. The meeting was held at the Joe Deutsch cafe, and was arranged by Abe Tannenbaum, May Chairman.

Unquestionably, Mr. Will feels that Mother Nature has done a pretty swell job and should be brought in, rather than shut out. Glass blocks make him feel as though he's under water, he said, and he strongly suspects that school children feel the same way.

"Why not," he asked, "give them a window through which they may see the sky, a few trees, and watch the birds fly by?"

Mr. Will is extremely critical of the school architect who follows the formula of glass block, streamlined desks and fluorescent lighting. Excessive illumination, he contends, can overstimulate children.

MEMBERS ATTENDING

The members attending the dinner were Francis J. Rose, Mark F. Pfaller, Harry A. Ollrogge, A. J. Seitz, Harry Bogner, Joseph J. Weiler, William C. Schneider, Urban F. Peacock, Arthur O. Reddemann, Frederick J. Schweitzer, Allen J. Strang, Gerrit J. deGelleke, C. W. Burroughs, John Messmer, Herbert J. Grassold, John P. Jacoby, Wallace R. Lee, Jr., Alvin E. Grellinger, Leigh Hunt, Francis S. Gurda, Edwin A. Wagner, T. L. Eschweiler, Robert P. Potter, Walter A. Domann, Thomas L. Kemp, Henry P. Plunket, William V. Kaeser, Gregory Lefebvre, Roger M. Herbst, W. Robert Jennings, Abe A. Tannenbaum, Norman A. Hintz, Roswell H. Graves, Austin A. Fraser, Robert J. Van Lanen, Thomas H. Flad, Lyle Pozorski, E. P. Dembeck, Gerold O. Ziebell, Lester J. Niehoff, Robert E. McMullin, Harold R. Ames, Murray L. P. Kinnich, M. F. Siewert, Robert F. Zinns, Howard E. Schroeder, Don P. Libby, Hubert L. Hirsch, Walter E. Zoller, Edmund Kowalski, Marcia Trestrail, James Ljewski, L. E. Bray, Robert J. Sherburne, Donald A. Davis, Bruce D. Boswell, Lester G. Seubert and Cliff Gronemeyer.

Guests included W. R. Prokapovics, A. H. Siewert, Harold Baylerian, August W. Reinke, Jr., Eugene J. Bernett, J. Mandovnakon, M. Sherer, M. H. Isley, John W. Spansy, Henry M. Biederer, Earl W. May, Herb Haibig, Chet Lubenow, Harvey Roeknen, William Wenzler and Robert E. Rasche.

It is assumed that the guests who attended the dinner meeting are eligible and interested in affiliation with the Association. Therefore, Arthur O. Reddemann, Program Chairman, asks those who brought guests to please notify him as to what architectural offices these men are connected, so that they may be contacted for possible membership.

How the office of Magney, Tusler & Setter is run
As told to Wisconsin Architects by Wilbur H. Tusler, Minneapolis

We have published verbatum, Mr. Tusler's extemporaneous talk to the Architects' Convention in Milwaukee, February 9, 1952, as we believe its very impromptu presentation makes it all the more interesting. — Editor.

PART II — CONCLUSION

Then we have evolved another system to save the office time. We furnish the contractors with blank requisitions for estimates. Then they fill them out themselves and send them in to us for approval. Formerly we typed all that out from some request for payment from them and no two were uniform and it took quite a bit of time. But by furnishing them with these forms, they fill them out and send them in, and all we have to do is to check and sign them and send them in to the owner. You would be surprised when you have a bunch of jobs going through how much that helps. That one happens to be for a fixed sum job. This is another one on cost plus. These items are: Maximum cost, fixed fee, and total. That will show any additions and credits, net contracts to date, value of work completed to date, total previously certified, amount due on this request. Then when this all comes in it is very simple to pick up this card and check that with what has gone on before. In a few minutes you are ready to sign the thing and send it out.

MR. VON GROSSMANN: How do you handle that in your office? Do you have technical people do that, or do you have secretaries or accountants?

MR. TUSLER: That is done under the supervision of the office, a secretary that is under the chief supervisor, and when that comes to my office for final signature it will be stamped with a "Received" stamp with the date on it and the initials of the people that have seen it. So I can tell by looking at that who has seen and approved it, and then I sign it and mark my name on there and the person that is taking care of it marks with an "X". When that is filed and you pick that up months later and you want to know who has answered — we use the same thing on letters — you can see who has seen that letter and who has finally taken care of it. That is the most helpful thing we have in the office. Every letter, ever piece of literature that comes in is stamped "Received" and then whoever has charge of the job, marks on who should see that. Most of the letters come over my desk and I put the initials of who should see it and who should answer it, and then it is a penitentiary offense if the girl files a letter without that "X" on it. If a person is to answer it, we draw a line. When the person has taken care of it, they mark with an "X" and we get after the girl if we find one in the files that hasn't been taken care of. Then this is the regular approved stamp for shop drawings.

We have a form we use to send out with shop drawings so that we don't have to write a letter on it. We fill it in in three places and send them back.

Then for our allocation of materials, all that delightful part of the office, we have a form for the number of tons, number of pounds, and the difference in the different quarters which we can fill out and send in. It simplifies things. As you say, you would rather practice architecture than fill out forms, but we do find it helpful.

Now, on accounting we do similar to what Morgan Yost does. We keep daily time cards for each person, which is not in agreement with the A.I.A. accounting system, which advocates a weekly time card. We had that. It didn't work. The men will get along to Thursday or Friday and look at the ceiling and say, "What did I do Tuesday afternoon?" Well, they will do that invariably. Now, Morgan has got that licked by checking every day. We do it by having a girl go around every morning and pick up time cards.

Then we keep it broken down into general work and mechanical and structural, and when we get down to the sketch stage we draw a line across the ledger, and we can figure up how we are coming financially. Then we get down to the end of the working drawings and we draw another line, and from then on it is supervision, although you will find certain jobs that are let cost plus where they will start construction while you are still in working drawings. Then you have to put on your time card what is supervision and what is not.

We keep track of our overhead. We base our overhead on a ten-year period theoretically, but each month on the books that come over my desk, there is the overhead for the last month, and if our overhead jumps up, then is the time when I start to trace that down and see where the leak is. I don't have to wait for six months until I haven't any money in the bank to determine there is a leak. I can find at the end of that first month. If our overhead has been running around 47, 48, 50 per cent and then it jumps to 56, something is wrong. Then I go back in the books and try to find out what has happened, and there is time, as Morgan mentioned, in an office that you can't charge to a job. That, we in our office, call "601". With the stenographers there is quite a bit of it; with principals there is quite a bit of it, and each one of the principals and associates keep a time card like everyone else, and we are paid a salary, and then we give a bonus to the associates which is not tied in to the amount of profit we make, but according to what we feel the man is worth to the firm and how much money we have. And what is left we divide between the three of us.

At one time it was my bright idea to give a certain percentage of our profits to the drafting room which they divided up according to the length of time they had been there and the amount of salary they got. It worked fairly well as long as we were making money, but we got into a little tight period where we were losing money and then they got the books out and criticized our overhead. They criticized us when we took a day off or an afternoon to play golf with a client ,and finally we said, "To hell with the whole thing," and quit it.

So now in paying bonuses we do not tie it in with the profits. We don't allow the associates to see our books, and at the end of the year, or during the year at certain times, we say, "Well, now we ought to give a bonus of $1,000 or $1,500," and they have no tie-back and have no criticism. That has worked fine with us.

We have that problem with our office which some of you had where men get up to a certain point; they may be 40, 45 years old; they are not partners of the firm; they wonder what is going to happen to them. That is a delicate situation. You may give them a bonus, as we do, but still they haven't a contract. If we wanted to we could turn around and give them two weeks' notice or two months' notice and let them go. We have recently taken in three more partners from the associates just to give them that security and to give us the security that they won't leave and go to someone else. Now, that is always a difficulty with a medium sized firm or in a large firm.

MR. KAESER: Did you disband your office completely during the war?

MR. TUSLER: There were three of us there. No draftsmen. It was a little tough for a while, but we kept our office open and tried to keep our name before the public, and now it is paying off.

VOICE: Do you feel that a promotion from the drafting room to an associateship warrants an increase in pay necessarily?

MR. TUSLER: I would think so, yes. If a man has the caliber to be an associate, he is worth more money than he is as just a draftsman or job captain.

VOICE: Job captains or engineer. Do you think even though you feel he might be paid a sufficient salary that by taking him in as an associate he should be jumped; right?

MR. TUSLER: Yes. We feel that he is worth more to the office or we wouldn't be making him an associate.

VOICE: I was thinking of the assurance of keeping him, so you could assure yourself to keep him in your employ.

MR. TUSLER: Well, we try to keep the salaries in line and pay a man as much as we can, as much as he is worth, and try to keep him on that basis.

MR. VON GROSSMANN: Do you have some sort of agreement or form that you use, any program such as associates that would give elbow to other architects?

MR. TUSLER: We have the men sign when they come into the office. It is a kind of an agreement. It tells them what they can expect with regard to holidays, sickness and all different features of the office, and they read that over and sign it. We have no agreement with our associates. We would have an agreement with partners.

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MR. VON GROSSMANN: No agreement at all with associates?

MR. TUSLER: No. Now, there is one thing I might as well mention here. With the partners we get out each month a statement of what it has cost us to do work that month, which shows the value of the firm as of that month. The three partners — and there will be six now — sign that statement. We have an agreement that if one of us should die, to the widow we would pay the value as shown on that statement as of that month, which we have all signed, plus a certain agreed good will, so that that is set up and there can't be any squabbling, and to make that legal we had all our wives sign the agreement that they would work it that way also; otherwise they would say, they had nothing to do with it.

Now, that I think you ought to give some thought to because any one of us might get in an automobile accident or have something else happen and then there would be a grand squabble. But if you get a statement out and you make an agreement how you will settle things up in case of a death, it is going to save somebody a lot of grief later on and hard feelings.

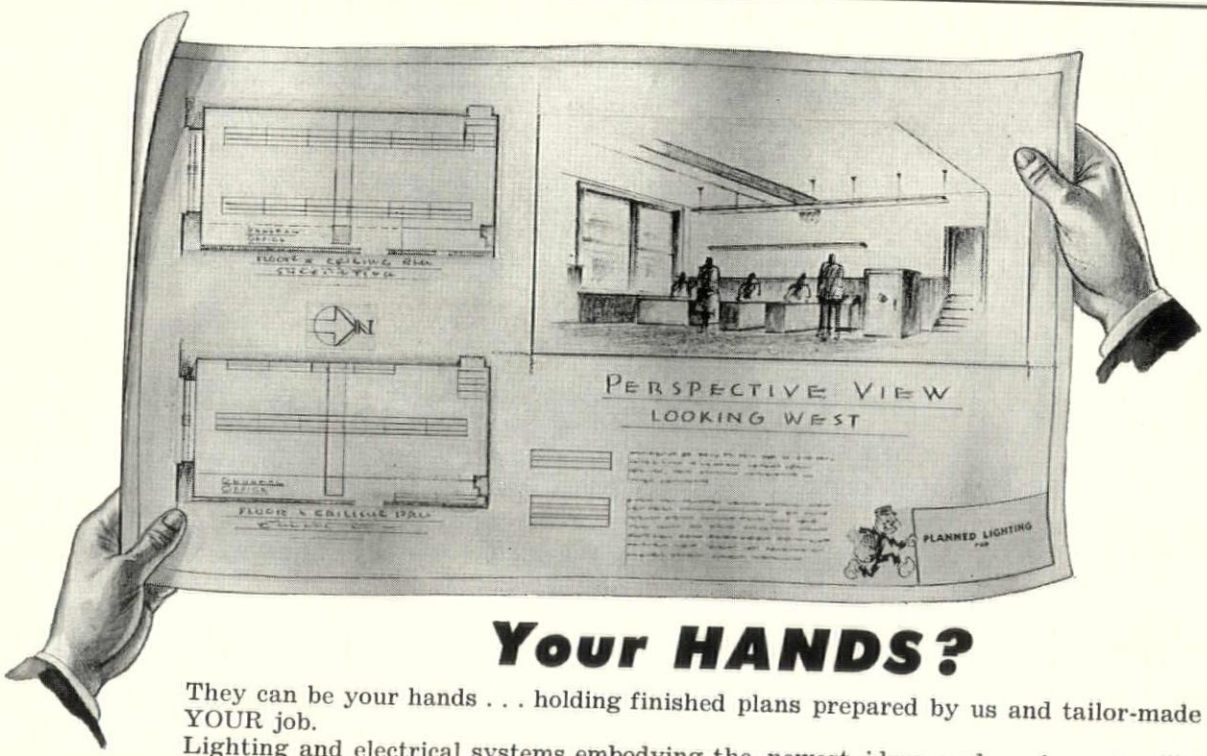
VOICE: Does that mean that you go through every job and appraise the value of it as of that moment? For instance, if you have working drawings three-quarters finished do you set a value on those?

MR. TUSLER: Only in this way: Each month every hour that is put in on that job is recorded on our ledger and it shows what that job has cost us. We do not evaluate the profit that has accrued. We take that as a cost. Our profit is taken care of by what we call good will, and we are supposed to sit down every three months and revalue our good will, but that agreement says that the good will as established will be established every three months, re-established, or the agreement will hold until the next meeting.

Now, it has been eighteen months since we revalued our good will, but still what we agreed upon at that time carries on through to the next meeting. Also there is a factor there. If we go out and get a large contract, even before we start work on that job, that contract is worth something to the office, and that has to be taken care of in good will. I don't think either you or I could say that that contract is worth $10,000 or $15,000 or $5,000. You just have to guess at that, and when you go into the theory of trying to determine what good will is, you have got something on your hands. Our accountant gave us, I think, fifteen different ways of figuring good will and after going through them I was so confused I just looked at the ceiling and then we determined that our good will would be so and so.

VOICE: If you have a partner that would be inactive for a certain length of time, how do you handle that?

MR. TUSLER: Well, you know what they do with a horse when he breaks his leg. (Laughter) I can't answer that. I don't know. We have never had that thing come up. We would try to carry him and we could do so for a certain length of time, but if he



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was inactive for a year or two years or three years, it would be too great a drain on the firm to carry him. We haven't worked out anything for that and we have not had any occasion yet to have that come up.

We are getting to a point now where some of the older ones of us want to take a little more vacation, and particularly with new partners coming in the firm we are allowing a month's vacation, and if we want to take more than that, our salary drops during that time. However, our profits of the firm do go on. If we want to take a two-month vacation, one month would be with salary and one without.

For salary I will say we place that rather modestly at $600 a month apiece, and that is for principals and associates, and that time goes on to our time cards and is charged against the job, and we work the charge a little differently than any office I know about. We figure that a man in the office takes a certain amount of desk space. There is a certain amount of cost for telephones and all that. So we say that his desk space costs fifty cents an hour, whether it is one of the principals or a new man just from the university. Then we take fifty per cent of his salary for lost time and those intangibles, and the combination of the two is overhead. Now, is that clear?

Now, many offices take the salary and multiply it by two, or they take the salary and multiply it by a certain percentage. I got curious and asked about twelve or fourteen offices in the Twin Cities on cost-plus work, "How do you charge?" and you would be surprised at the differences. There was one office that took the salary and multiplied it by three, that is, they added one hundred per cent for overhead and another one hundred per cent for profit, but the principals did not charge, but when we got all through and averaged them up, they were charging about seventy-five per cent for overhead and about twenty-five per cent for profit.

So in our bulletin that the State of Minnesota is getting out on architect's charges and fees and so forth, they are recommending on cost-plus that the architect charge his drafting cost, that is, the rate per hour per man, whether he is principal, associate or draftsman, and to that add seventy-five per cent for overhead and then add thirty-three and one-third per cent of the combination of the two for profit. Because we did that, we stated what was the recommendation, because there can be as much competition on a cost-plus arrangement as there can be on percentage. If one man goes in and says, "'Well, I will only charge you fifty per cent overhead," he is competing with the man who says, "I am charging you seventy-five," and knows what his costs are.

VOICE: Would you mind saying what the average salaries are, from job captains down, in your drafting room at the present time?

MR. TUSLER: I don't know as I can give you that, but our average, taking the entire office through, is $2.17 an hour of salaries paid, and that starts with the principals and goes all the way down through superintendents and everybody.

MR. YOST: Does it include secretarial?

MR. TUSLER: Yes, and the secretaries keep a time card like everybody else and pay fifty cents an hour for their desk space.

Now, of every dollar that we take into the firm our cost is sixty-nine and three-tenths per cents and we make thirty and seven-tenths per cent profit. It will be interesting to some of you to take your books last year and take the cost of running your office. Take the total amount of money that you took in and check that figure.

Now, our overhead, that is, the amount we would have to add to our drafting cost per hour on a ten-year average, ran fifty-one and eight-hundredths. Now, if some of you smaller offices will check your overhead, I think you will find that is a little low. As I said, the average of the fourteen offices in the Twin Cities, as far as I could tell from some of their lack of bookkeeping, was seventy-five per cent.

I want to encourage you all to use a bookkeeping system, and preferably the A.I.A., because then when I use figures like this they will mean something to you and you can compare them with your figures, but if everybody has a different way and in some offices the principals don't keep their times and in others they do, these figures don't mean anything.

For distribution, mail, magazines, catalogs, memoranda, superintendents' reports, surveys and soil tests, they are all stamped "Received." They come in over my desk and are marked to go to the different people who are to see them.

I went over the forms of progress and approval of shop drawings.

Printing of drawings and specifications: Our office is large enough so that we have an Hecktograph for specifications, and that department is run separate from the rest of the office in that we have a separate room for that. We charge that department rent. We charge salaries and depreciation on equipment and all supplies, and then we charge the jobs just what we

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would have to pay if we sent it down to a commercial blueprinter. Last month that department made us $630. We have one trained man in there who runs it and when we get into a big bunch of work or specifications, then he has to pull help in. We do get into a little difficulty.

We had a job that is out now for figures that runs about two and a half million and the printing on that was tremendous, and we held up the job just about a week because we selfishly insisted on running it through our own printing department so we could make the profit on it rather than sending it out to a commercial printing department. The advantage is not only in the amount of money you make from running the department, but you can get your prints quickly and there are a lot of different stunts you can do in making transparencies, making on a building your walls and doors and windows and partitions and everything, making a transparency and turning one over to the mechanical and electrical structural and letting them put their work right on that. Then you don't have to redraw this building four different times, and if they are redrawn by mechanical men you know what they look like when they get through, and then if you want to when you get through with all these transparencies with these mechanical features on, you can put one over the other and you can look down the elevator shaft and see where some dude has run a pipe right out through the middle of it, which is helpful. There are many different things you can do with that.

I explained to you about memos, how we keep track of the different meetings and so forth, and that is very important, and particularly sending a copy to the owner, and then we have the bugbear in our offices, the same as any of you who have been in business for a length of time, of knowing what to do with old drawings and how to keep them, and specifications and so forth, and one day you get enthusiastic and you go in and clean out a lot of drawings and the week after one of the drawings you have thrown away is very valuable to you — some job comes up. But I have no solution for that. I have never seen any yet. We pay $27 a month for a room just to store that stuff that may be useful some time and may not.

We do make a point on a job of not throwing away any sketch or any drawing until the final payment is made. We used to, when the sketch stage was finished. We would save the drawings; all the studies and everything were cleaned out of the drawer and thrown in the basket, and we had a lawsuit one time and the attorney said, "Now, let's see the drawings you made." Well here were very few drawings, working drawings, one set of sketches. "You mean you charged that amount of money for these drawings?" "Well, there were a lot of others." "Well, where are they?" "Well, we destroyed them." "How do we know you made them?" So now we keep everything until the final payment is made and then we go through and keep what we want for record and destroy the rest.

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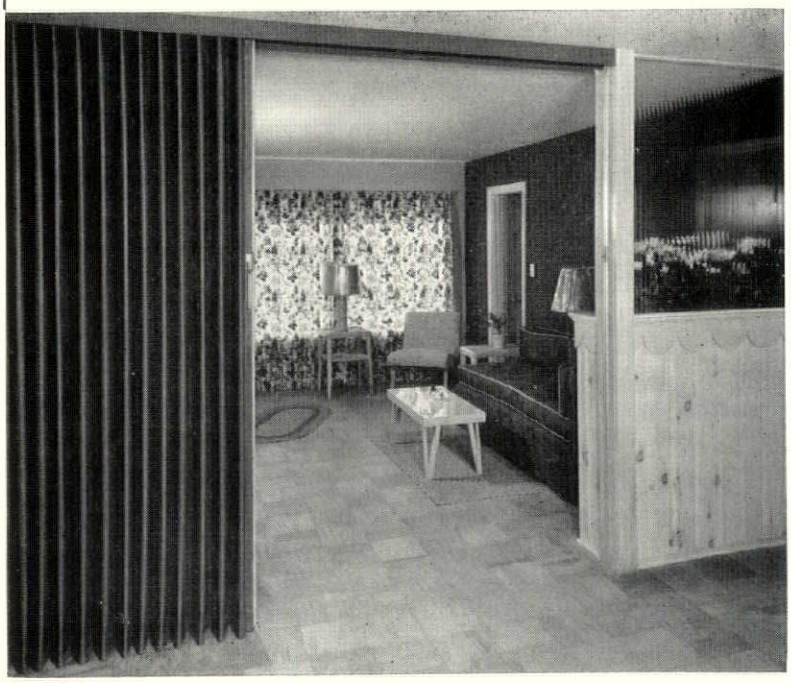

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VOICE: Have you investigated microfilm?

MR. TUSLER: Yes. At one time when we were doing a large job we got worried about fire. I will go into the insurance business a little later, but we had those drawings microfilmed every week as we went along. Now, this isn't record which you are talking about; this is really something else. So if we had a fire they might pay us $10- or $15,000, but on a job of that size that didn't mean very much, but we had a microfilm of every drawing at that stage so that we could at the most lose one week. We could have these microfilms blown up and go right on with our drawings from there, and it costs you very little and that is something to think of where you have got $50-, $60-, $100,000 tied up in a set of working drawings that are almost completed.

Now, to answer your question, we did go into that and investigated and for some reason, I think it was cost, decided it wasn't feasible. I can't answer too clearly on that because I don't remember, but we did go into it and looked at the machines and the whole business. Some day it may be worked out. I don't know of any office that really does that. Does anybody here?

MR. WEILER: I do know the Robert E. Haddus Company, mechanical engineers in Chicago, microfilm everything and they keep it in a vault or in a safe in their own office, but the mechanics of it I do not know.

MR. TUSLER: These microfilms we took of these drawings we put in a vault or safe away from the office. We didn't make the mistake of putting them in the office so, in case of fire, the microfilms would be destroyed too.

Now, keeping track of drawings that are made and issued and received is quite a job in itself when your office gets larger. We have one girl who does nothing else but that. The sketches, the records of sketches and the sketch numbers are kept by the individual who is making the sketches. We have a drawer for that. He goes to the drawer supposedly and puts the sketch record on there. With the working drawings, those are kept by the job captain. He is the one who assigns numbers to the drawings, and they are put on a card index, the name of the man who made the drawing and the scale and so forth. But for drawings issued and shop drawings received and issued, it goes through this one girl who has a loose-leaf memorandum book in which she makes records. She just writes those out longhand and then they are filed that way. That is quite valuable later

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on when a question comes up as to who saw a drawing and who didn't see a drawing. They will sometimes claim they did not get this drawing or that drawing, or the owner didn't see it. If you have got it all down in black and white there, it helps.

Now, employee relationships: I mentioned that we have a contract that we show to the employees and they sign when they come in. They keep one copy and we keep a copy. We give a two-week paid vacation, seven holidays; with illnesses if they are ill for one week we ask them to make that up. We pay them the salary and then they make it up.

Now, that has complications. If a man is a high enough salaried man so he doesn't get into time and a half, there are no complications. If it is time and a half, he can't make the time up the same week he was sick so you can only have him make up I think it is two-thirds of the time for the reason that when he works to make up, he works an hour and it comes in a week that he has already worked forty hours so you have to pay him time and a half for that hour. So he gets an hour and a half credit in making up time for every hour he is out of the office. That can't be helped.

Then we pay them if they are ill beyond that point $50 a week while they are out. If it is a person geting less than that amount per week, stenographic help or something, they get the amount of their salary, but we pay the amount of the salary up to but not exceeding $50 a week. Now, that won't take care of a $2.00 an hour, but it does help.

MR. YOST: For how long?

MR. TUSLER: We do that for thirteen weeks. We started with an insurance policy but we have found over the years that we can pay them twice as much if we run the risk of an epidemic in the office than we can through an insurance company. We have Blue Cross in the office. The people subscribe to that individually. The firm does not pay it. The same with Blue Shield. We have no life insurance. Some offices, I understand, do carry life insurance for their people, but we haven't gone into that.

We do take students on. We encourage them to come in the office and usually have six or seven every summer. We encourage responsibility, and we serve coffee twice a day in the middle of the morning and middle of the afternoon. Before we did that the men and the girls were running down to the coffee shop, and a long-distance 'phone call would come in and you would rush out in the drafting room and here were six empty tables and no information at all, and they would take twenty, twenty-five minutes twice a day. So now we cart this machine through the office. We pay for the coffee. If they want to buy rolls or anything else, that is on their own.

We do carry an insurance policy to protect the firm from lawsuits against our employees and us when they are on company business, so that they may even say they are on company business when they are not and sue the firm. Well, this policy protects us. We started out by having a clause put in their insurance policies which would protect us, but then somebody that we hadn't contemplated having go out on a job is picked out some day and we ask him to do so and so and he grabs his car and has an accident; then we are not protected. Now we are.

MR. KAESER: I didn't understand the question before. Does the State of Minnesota require you to carry unemployment compensation insurance over a certain number of employees?

MR. TUSLER: No. The state has an unemployment insurance and you pay a certain percentage of your payroll to cover employment. His question was accident, but I will answer the unemployment, too. Your rate you pay depends on your previous record. So if a person leaves our employ, we ask him to leave, and he doesn't get a job, he puts in a claim; then at the end of the year we call up the Department of State and ask how much those claims are. Maybe they are $111. We pay them the $111 to keep our record clear and we pay one-tenth of one per cent. Now, I know some firms pay as high as three per cent, but we watch that and we pay the claims ourselves, and to keep our record clear and in addition pay them one-tenth of one per cent of all our salaries just for keeping the department going. If we should have a depression or war or something and we would have to let everybody go, then we wouldn't do that. We would let the state pay it and then our rate would go up at a time when we would have very few employees so it wouldn't make much difference.

MR. KAESER: What kind of a deal do you have to work in Illinois?

MR. YOST: Unless we have eight employees or more the state compensation is not mandatory. I have never come under it.

MR. TUSLER: You all want to watch this forty-hour hour week and not run your men over that unless you pay them time and a half because I have known some architects — this happened to be in South Dakota — where it caught up with them and they had to pay quite a sizable hunk of money.

VOICE: You mentioned that there was a demarcation in salary where that does not apply. What is that?

MR. TUSLER: That is no definite amount. You will have to determine that yourself. The law, I believe, says that when a man has responsibility of his own, then you do not have to pay him time and a half for overtime. Where that comes, you will have to determine, or you and your attorney. We have said in our office $300 a month. If a man is getting over $300 a month, he must have some responsibility.

VOICE: That time and half applies only to interstate work, doesn't it?

MR. TUSLER: Yes, but that interstate is a very catch-all phrase. You may do work for a company that does interstate commerce and you are thrown into interstate commerce.

VOICE: Only if the building is completed, but while the building is under construction I don't believe that applies.

MR. TUSLER: Well, I won't answer that. You ask your attorney. I know we went into that and it was so complicated that we decided we would pay the time and a half and not monkey with it. There was even a case where if you built a new building for a company you come under one heading; if you remodeled a building for that same company, you came under another heading. We didn't want to monkey with it. We do enough interstate business; we couldn't keep our men separated.

With our associates we pay them a salary and a bonus not tied in to profit, but we say to them, "Clubs that you belong to, that is your own business. That is your solicitation." So we do not pay their club dues, or entertainment they may do that is strictly solicitation.

VOICE: On that point, would you care to say anything about the relationship of the amount of bonus to basic salary? Don't you feel that that bonus should be kept to a reasonable minimum so that the employee knows where he stands regardless of whether or not he gets his bonus?

MR. TUSLER: Are you talking about an employee or associate?

VOICE: Associate.

MR. TUSLER: Last year it was $7,200 salary and $4,500 bonus.

VOICE: That $4,500 might be taken away from them?

MR. TUSLER: That is right. If we got into a bad year or if, for instance, we felt that that employee wasn't worth that to us, we might drop that down to $3,000 or $2,000 or $1,000.

VOICE: Does he have any inkling during the year as to what he might expect?

MR. TUSLER: No, except that along in March when the sun comes out and it looks nice we feel free and we pay him $1,000 then. Then along in July we may give him another $1,000 because it is about vacation time, and then in September another, and then at Christmas we give him whatever we feel we can; but during the year that would give him an inkling as to what he was going to get, and if March came along and the sun came out and he didn't get any bonus, he would know something was wrong.

VOICE: Wasn't there a recent ruling that an employee after receiving a bonus for a certain number of years is legally . . .

MR. TUSLER (Interrupting): I think that was only tied into unions. That was the case with unions where they had been receiving bonuses and the government, I believe, ruled that they couldn't then discontinue the bonus without taking it up with the unions, I believe, but there is another angle to that. If you haven't previously paid a man a bonus, you can't pay him over $50 bonus. If you didn't pay him the bonus the year before, you can't pay him more than $50, or if you paid him a bonus last year, you can't increase that by any more than $50 this year.

We wanted to increase our associates' bonus and we didn't want to be tied down by that $50, so we took it up with our accountant and he said, "Did you give them an increase of salary this year?" We said, "No." He said, "Then you can count that in as a bonus." So we took last year's bonus and added to that the $50 plus ten per cent of their salary and that was the total bonus. There are more than one ways of skinning a cat, but sometimes it is difficult. It is hard when you have trouble giving money away.

MR. VON GROSSMANN: Do you give your employees in lieu of salary an expense account, that is, your associates?

MR. TUSLER: No.

MR. VON GROSSMANN: To help them tax-wise?

MR. TUSLER: We don't. When they go out on a job they charge mileage and expenses they run into. We do not give an expense account. One thing that we do which pays off: We give two parties a year for

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the entire force, one in the middle of the winter. We did formerly have it before Christmas, but that got to be a too hectic period, so we give it now after Christmas, for the men and their wives. Then in the summer we give a picnic for the men, and you'd be surprised how much that helps public relations. They get rather friendly and it helps. It costs you a little money, but that is part of office expense. You charge that off.

Now, I mentioned the insurance. We carry that insurance to protect ourselves from employees' accidents in cars. We carry The American Institute of Architects insurance which isn't what we all thought it was when it first came out. We carry insurance on our drawings and records, fire and water, and you should be very careful how that is worded so that it includes everything.

VOICE: How much is that policy, Mr. Tusler, in your office?

MR. TUSLER: I can't tell you the amount we pay on it. It isn't a great amount. The premium isn't very great, but you can just visualize a small fire in your office and a fireman turning a good sized hose in there. You will wake up at night and have goose pimples.

VOICE: Do you put your drawings in a vault at night to reduce that insurance?

MR. TUSLER: Theoretically they go in the drawers at night; practically. They stay on the boards.

VOICE: Is that the fire policy called "Important Papers"?

MR. TUSLER: It may be, but you want to be sure that it states "and all other appurtenances connected with the business."

VOICE: My policy has a special clause in it, "development of plans."

VOICE: How much of the real worth of those drawings could you recover in case of a loss?

MR. TUSLER: Reproduction cost; what it would cost you to reproduce them. There would be trouble with that, I know, if you had an accident because you may have a set of working drawings completed and the building started and they aren't worth to you the cost of reproducing because you have sets of those around. On the other hand, if you had a set that was approaching completion and it was destroyed, you would have to reproduce them.

MR. VON GROSSMANN: Do you carry the type of insurance you thought you were carrying when you took out that $25 policy? I mean have you taken out that kind of policy?

MR. TUSLER: No. We investigated that and no insurance company in the United States will write it. You have to go to Lloyds in London, and you find that you cannot afford it. For our firm I figured up it would cost us $65- or $70,000 a year to carry that type of insurance. So you can see what their opinion was of us as architects.

There is one thing I want to bring up and that is modular dimensioning. We started about three or maybe four years ago on a large veterans' hospital using modular dimensioning on the outside walls. We have kept on with that more and more so now our buildings are completely dimensioned modular all the way through, and beside that we use a design grid which may run 3, 4, 3, 8 or 3, 4 feet, but that would be in accordance with modular dimensioning, and it is surprising the number of dimensions which that will cut down on your drawings. It is much easier to make the drawings. And after you can get over the original objections of the foreman on the job, how much easier it is to build by it. And you take these youngsters that come out of the university into the office and are brought up on modular dimensioning. They wouldn't go back to the old type of dimensioning any more than they would go back to designing a colonial or a gothic building. It is just foreign to them. The brick companies are now coming around so that you can get your modular brick. You can get competition in the brick, and we are getting less objection from the contractors all the time and it is becoming much easier.

We do put a general explanation of the system on each set of drawings that goes out, and that is not only on the general but it is on the mechanical as well, so that they can take that and by studying it they can find out what it is all about. Then if they want to rent a piece of ground next door to start their dimensioning out there, they can do so.

MR. WEILER: Mr. Tusler, you have said something about consultants because of the mechanical, structural and electrical within your own office. Do you have any comments to make concerning consultants, any experience that you would like to pass on?

MR. TUSLER: Just this: Unless you have a very good man in your office who understands mechanical, it is cheaper to have it done by somebody outside, and the more definite information you give him, if you go through these basics and you have your basics all set and signed before you turn it over to him, you will get a much better price from him and he will do a better job for you.

I think in our case it seems to work out better to do our own mechanical, structural and electrical right in the office. We feel that they work a little closer with the men, and if sometimes you employ a mechanical man outside and he will say you can't do so and so, well, if you have the man in your own office where you can get him down and sit on him for a little while, he will work a way to do it the way you want. With an outside man, you can't do that.

MR. WEILER: Do you know of any architects that have standard fees set up or standard contract setups for consultants?

MR. TUSLER: No, I do not. You mean a certain fee for your heating, plumbing, on a certain basis? I think they do have certain set fees, but we have done our own work since 1917 so our experience is nil.

MR. WEILER: Does anybody else here have any experience in that regard?

MR. WILEY: I would like to ask a question on draftsmen. My experience is there is a great variation in men and that the best men always carry less ability with them. Have you any way of having to carry along a lot of deadheads for the little they can do in order to get a job done?

MR. TUSLER: As soon as work in the office begins to ease off, we squeeze those men out and then take new men in. The difficulty comes up when a competitor calls you and says, "So and so is coming to my office and wants to work. What do you think of him?" There is where you have to remember your question.

PRESIDENT HERBST: Mr. Tusler is a very modest sort of man when he speaks of an office of his type as a medium office.

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